

## Smooth Paths (II)

*“For you will go out with joy and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands!” (Isaiah 55:12, New American Standard Bible).*

This is the key Bible verse for the **“Come and See”** devotional today.

As suggested by the key verse above, we can always expect obstacles on the road to glory. This is also evident in the words of Apostle Paul: *“for a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.”* (1st Corinthians 16:9, New King James Version). The only contest in this world that really matters is the one between people wanting to make progress and the devil who is determined to hinder them. Here, the word *progress* does not necessarily indicate physical activities alone but also refers to the general well-being of our spirit, soul and body (read 3<sup>rd</sup> John verse 2).

Barriers on our way to glory must be removed so that we can enjoy smooth progress. The first step is to ensure that we do not fall into the habit of complaining. Every day we spend in the land of the living should be marked with a joyful approach: each day is a blessing and unique. The ever-joyful King David stated: *“blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation!”* (Psalm 68:19, New King James Version). Every new day gives hope that bad situations can improve; therefore, we must embrace every day with a glad heart and expect God’s blessings.

‘Joy’ is a small word of only three letters but it remains one of the most difficult things for human beings to achieve. Joyfulness is the end product of thanksgiving. We cannot be joyful if we are not thankful and this comes from being thoughtful. Only the heart that meditates upon the goodness of God can truly be thankful enough to experience JOY.

The strength of God is needed to break those barriers to our destinations: however, there is power in being joyful. Nehemiah’s recommendation to the Israelites in their time of weakness, was joy. He said to them: *“go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”* (Nehemiah 8:10, New King James Version).

We must consciously be thankful as we go out with joy each day. By doing so, we will experience a greater joy as we return with thanksgiving. Remember: *“you will show me the path of life, in your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”* (Psalm 16:11, New King James Version). According to the book of Exodus in the bible, the absence of joy in the camp of the Israelites on their journey to the Promised Land caused them a delay of forty years.

Similarly the Bible states: *“rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice!”* (Philippians 4:4, New International Version). Be joyful in the Almighty God who does not change, in order for us to experience an improvement in our circumstances. Every day is to our benefit and so we must be glad and embrace today.

Let us pray: “Father, may I receive your grace to be thankful always. Fill me with your joy every day of my life,” in Jesus’ Mighty Name, Amen).

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